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Study on Mary Magdalene



There are several admirable qualities in Mary Magdalene's personality that we can learn from by reading the four Gospels. Here are some of them:

1. Faith : Mary Magdalene steadfastly believed in Jesus and his teachings. Despite the challenges and doubts, she remained faithful and trusted in his message.

2. Courage: Mary Magdalene showed immense courage by being present at Jesus' crucifixion and being one of the last few individuals at his tomb. This demonstrates her bravery and determination. Courage to speak up: Mary Magdalene was not afraid to challenge societal norms and speak her mind. She boldly proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus, despite facing skepticism and doubt from others.

3. Loyalty and devotion: Mary Magdalene was a devoted disciple of Jesus. She stood by him throughout his ministry, even to the point of accompanying him during his crucifixion and staying by his side until the very end.

4. Persistence: Mary Magdalene continued to search for Jesus even after his death. She went to his tomb early in the morning and did not give up until she found him or received answers to her questions.

5. Love and compassion: Mary Magdalene deeply cared for Jesus and his well-being. She demonstrated empathy and compassion towards him and his teachings, which is evident in her commitment to his cause.

6. Forgiveness and transformation: Mary Magdalene is often associated with being forgiven by Jesus and experiencing a

profound transformation. Her story exemplifies the power of forgiveness and the ability to change one's life for the better.

7. Charitable, She give out of her money and resources to support Jesus and his ministry.

Magdalene means a citizen of Magdala

The city she is from is only mentioned once in the Bible as a city Jesus visited.

Matthew 15:39 NKJV And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.

It was in that visit that we can guess was where Jesus met Mary Magdalene.

Which he cast 7 demons from her . We don't know what demons she had.

Luke 8:2 NKJV and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities”Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons,

Mark 16:9 NKJV Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

The Bible speaks of many different kinds of demons and we don’t know for sure what kind of demons she had.

It was in a sermon named “the seven deadly sins ” by Pope Gregory I (540 -604 AD) that the unnamed woman in Luke 7 who washed Jesus feet with her tears was mentioned to be Mary Magdalene which he accused Mary of having the demon of prostitution. Taking out context of Luke 7 where we are told Mary Magdalene had seven demons but we are not told of what.

And poor Mary Magdalene has been that prostitute since. But before him Ambrose also named her as that woman.

To name a few here are some demons mentioned in the Bible.

Like demon of divination

Act 16:16 NKJV Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

Paul had a demon which always bother him which kept him humble

2Corinthians 12:7 NKJV And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

There are even demons that has to do with certain diseases

Luke 11:14 NKJV And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled.

Spirit of jealousy of ones spouse

Numbers 5:30 NKJV or when the spirit of jealousy comes upon a man, and he becomes jealous of his wife; then he shall stand the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute all this law upon her.

Spirit of ill Will

Judges 9:23 NKJV God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech,

We know she was a supporter of Jesus ministry

Luke 8:2-3 NKJV and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod[™]'s steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

It is safe to assume that if she supported Jesus ministry she was a woman of wealth and she probably followed Jesus in many of the places he went as a disciple.

The next time we see Mary Magdalene is at the cross with the other women who followed after Jesus.

Mark 15:40-41 NKJV There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, who also followed Him

and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

John 19:25 NKJV Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

By reading one can see her devotion to Jesus at moments she would probably look at Jesus from a distance at other times she was closer to the cross.

According to Roman laws, women were not allowed to see a crucifixion but these women who loved Jesus were persistent in their love for their master. And saw it. Maybe they were told by the guards to distance themselves that is why in one moment she was close then in another moment in a distance.

Mary Magdalene saw where Jesus was buried.

Mark 15:47 NKJV And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of
Joses observed where He was laid.

When you love someone you would want to know those details.

She with the other women had great faith going to the tomb of
Jesus to prepare the body not knowing who was going to roll the
stone away. But expecting it would be rolled away.

Mark 16:1-4 NKJV Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary
Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought
spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the
morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb
when the sun had risen. And they said among themselves,
“Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for
us?” But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had
been rolled away” for it was very large.

What is surprising that they didn't bother the 11 Apostles about the matter . They just went there expecting either it was to be rolled away or someone was to come to help them.

And was Mary Magdalene and the other women was the first to receive the news of Jesus resurrection.

Mark 16:5-8 NKJV And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples" and Peter" that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you." So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

And all four Gospels records her as the first to see Jesus after his Resurrection.

This is what makes the Gospel so true because women at that time was not a valid witness. If the four Gospel was false records they wouldn't have a woman as the first witness.

1. Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book 4, Chapter 8, Section 15

” But let not a single witness be credited, but three, or two at the least, and those such whose testimony is confirmed by their good lives. But let not the testimony of women be admitted, on account of the levity and boldness of their sex “

This can even be seen in Islam where the testimony witness of two women equals to that of a man.

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:282)

“O you who have believed, when you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down. And let a scribe write [it] between you in justice. Let no scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him. So let him write and let the one who has the obligation dictate. And let him fear Allah, his Lord, and not leave anything out of it. But if the one who has the obligation is of limited understanding or weak or unable to dictate himself, then let his guardian dictate in justice. And bring to witness two witnesses from among your men. And if there are not two men [available], then a man and two women from those whom you accept as witnesses - so that if one of the women errs, then the other can remind her.”

And it may be the reason why Paul when mentioning the witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus she is not mentioned in 1Corinthians 15 .

1 Corinthians 15:4-8

and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

Mary Magdalene with the other women was the first to go into the tomb to find the body of Jesus missing

John 20:1

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

Luke 24:1-3

Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

Mary Magdalene was the one who reported to the disciples about Jesus raised from the dead and was not believed by them.

Luke 24:10-11

It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.

And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.

Mark 16:9-11

Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept.

And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

Jesus had to rebuke his disciples for not believing her testimony with the others who saw him.

Mark 16:14

Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

And also she was brave enough to confront who she thought was the Gardner about the missing body of Jesus.

John 20:10-17

Then the disciples went away again to their own homes. But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have

laid Him.â€ Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, â€œWoman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?â€ She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, â€œSir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.â€ Jesus said to her, â€œMary!â€ She turned and said to Him, â€œRabboni!â€ (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, â€œDo not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, â€˜I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.â€™â€

Mary Magdalene showed immense courage and devotion to Jesus.

The early Church Fathers wrote about Mary Magdalene from the perspective of her role as a follower of Jesus and her experiences surrounding his death and resurrection. Here are some quotes

and references from the early Church Fathers regarding Mary Magdalene:

1. Origen (c. 185â€“254): Origen, an early Christian theologian, wrote in his “Homilies on Luke” (Hom. 33) that Mary Magdalene was the first to see Jesus after his resurrection. He described her as “the woman who had been a sinner but who was freed from a sinful life, changed through repentance, and made a witness of the resurrection and of Christ’s incarnation.”
2. St. Jerome (c. 347â€“420): St. Jerome, a theologian and biblical scholar, referenced Mary Magdalene in his work “Lives of Illustrious Men” (chapter 8). He mentioned that she was from the town of Magdala and that she had the privilege of being the first witness to the resurrected Jesus.
3. St. Augustine (354â€“430): In his sermon on John 33, St. Augustine referred to Mary Magdalene as a model of repentance

and faith. He depicted her as standing by the empty tomb and as the one to whom Jesus appeared first, considering her an important witness to the resurrection.

4. St. Gregory the Great (c. 540–604): St. Gregory the Great, in his Homily 25 on the Gospel of Luke, spoke about Mary Magdalene's seven demons being cast out by Jesus, emphasizing her transformation into a devoted follower. He also highlighted her presence at the crucifixion and resurrection, as well as her witness of the risen Christ.

5. Pope Gregory I (c. 540–604): In his "Homilies on the Gospels" (Hom. 25), Pope Gregory I described Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus after the resurrection. He emphasized her deep love and devotion to Christ, stating, "Because she loved more, she was made worthy to be the first to see the object of her love."

6. Ambrose of Milan (c. 337â€“397): Ambrose, in his commentary on Luke 7:36-50, described Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus at the Pharisee's house, where she washed his feet with her tears and anointed them with ointment. He portrayed her actions as a display of great repentance and humility.

7. St. Cyril of Alexandria (c. 378â€“444): In his "Commentary on Luke" (12:3), Cyril of Alexandria referred to Mary Magdalene as the "Apostle to the Apostles" because she was sent by Jesus to proclaim his resurrection to the disciples. He praised her faith and the pivotal role she played in spreading the good news.

8. Tertullian (c. 155â€“240): Tertullian, in his work "On the Resurrection of the Flesh" (chapter 23), mentioned Mary Magdalene as one of the women who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. He highlighted her presence at the tomb and mentioned her by name as a witness to these events.

9. St. John Chrysostom (c. 347–407): Chrysostom, in his “Homilies on Matthew” (Hom. 89), spoke about Mary Magdalene’s visit to the tomb and her encounter with the risen Christ. He emphasized her deep love and persistence in seeking Jesus, stating, “By her love, therefore, and her much seeking, she showed a soul that loved, unrelenting.”

These quotes give us a glimpse into the early Church’s appreciation for Mary Magdalene’s role as a faithful disciple and witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.